CE be pleased to state:

(a) the total value of exports, imports and trade deficit during 1984-85 and 1985-86;

(b) what was the rate of growth in export and import (in per cent) during the above period;

(c) what are the reasons for mounting trade deficit during 1985-86; and

(d) what are the prospects for the year 1986-87?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) and (b) According to the latest provisional data available upto December, 1985 India's foreign trade position is as under:—

		April-December	
	1984-85	1984	1985
Exports (Rs. Crores)	11855·15	8146·17	7655·57
%Variation in exports	+20·1	..	—6·0
Imports (Rs. Crores)	17173·25	11746·14	13866·57
%Variation in imports	+8·9	..	+28·0
Balance of trade (Rs. Crores)	—5318·10	—3579·97	—6211·00

SOURCE:—DGCI&S

(e) Apart from difficult international economic environment, the decline in our overall exports during the first nine months of 1985-86 is attributable partly to the fact that the exports of crude oil, which has reached a peak level of Rs. 1563 crores during the year 1984-85, have virtually stopped after April, 1985 due to development of domestic refining capacity. The export of crude oil during the first nine months of 1985-86 was only Rs. 135.15 crores.

Apart from bulk commodities like fertilizers and POL, the increase in imports during the first nine months of 1985-86 has been mostly with regard to industrial raw materials, intermediates and capital goods which are indicative of developmental needs of the economy.

(d) The export target for the current financial year 1986-87 has been fixed at Rs. 122.3 crores. All possible efforts are being made to achieve the export target set for the year.

Export/import of consumer goods

794. SHRIMATI KANAK MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of consumer goods along with their value, exported from India to different countries during 1985-86; and

(b) the details of the consumer goods imported into the country during the same period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) and (b) The Commodity country statistics of foreign trade of India are not yet available for the year 1985-86.

Smuggling racket unearthed in Delhi

795. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a well organised smuggling racket was recently unearthed by the Delhi Customs and Excise Collectorate; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof stating the action taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) and (b) The Officers of Collectorate of Customs, Delhi, unearthed a racket in the abuse of the facility of duty free import of raw materials/components permitted under the DEEC (Duty Exemption Entitlement Certificate) Scheme and evasion of Customs duty amounting to Rs. 50 lakhs in June, 1986. The facts of the case are as follows:—

M/s Rene Diffusion (Pvt.) Ltd., 619/80, Chhatarpur, Mehrauli, Delhi, was

permitted to import polyester fabrics and zip fasteners of foreign origin free of duty under the DEEC Scheme for manufacture of ready-made garments for export, under bond. Accordingly, they imported 1.13 lakh metres of polyester fabrics valued at Rs. 12.5 lakhs (CIF) and one lakh piece of zip fasteners valued at Rs. 1.03 lakhs (CIF) in March, 1986.

In order to fulfil the export obligations under the Scheme, the Unit filed four Shipping Bills for export of ready-made garments consigned to a party in Afghanistan. These consignments were duly examined and cleared for export out of the bonded warehouse. The goods were declared and certified as 100 per cent polyester garments (ladies night dresses/ nightwears) with 20 Cms. polyester zips.

On information, all the four consignments were intercepted and re-examined by customs authorities and they were found to contain ready-made garments made out of cotton fabrics of Indian origin mixed with ready made garments made out of polyester fabrics. Some of the zip fasteners fitted on the garments were of Indian origin. The goods contained in the four consignments valued at Rs 16.15 lakhs were seized under the provisions of the Customs Act, 1962.

Investigations conducted revealed that the Unit clandestinely removed and disposed off a part of the polyester fabrics and zip fasteners in the open market. In this connection, four persons including the officer of Customs, incharge of Bond were arrested under the Customs Act. Polyester fabrics, cotton night dresses, polyester ladies night dresses, and zip fasteners valued at Rs. 41.75 lakhs were also seized from the factory premises of the firm.

The officer of Customs concerned has also been placed under suspension.

"African Plan" to augment exports to African countries

796. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government formulated an "African Plan" sometime back to augment exports to the African countries; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof alongwith the follow-up strategy, if any, drawn up in this regard and the results achieved so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) and (b) A Plan for coordinated effort to promote exports to Selected African Countries was prepared sometime ago which took into account the trade linkages with India, the potential and development programmes of these countries. It covered activities such as participation in exhibitions and fairs, interaction between trade bodies etc. While such activities have been selectively carried out, the balance of payment crises in many of these countries, continued adverse weather conditions which have affected some economies and political uncertainties have stood in the way of implementing the Plan as such.

Iron ore exports

797. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that iron-ore exports have gone up recently if so, what are the details of exports of iron ore in terms of tonnage and earnings during the last three years;

(b) what are the reasons for higher exports of iron ore; and

(c) whether the production of pig iron has gone down, if so, the reasons